JOSHUA WILLIAMSON TOM REILLY LEE LOUGHRIDGE

G.I. JOE

image

#21

ENERGON UNIVERSE

CODENAME:

G.I. JOE

[MISSION LOG [04.021.01]

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TOM REILLY

COVER B

JOSHUA CASSARA
& ROMULO FAJARDO JR.

COVER C

BEN OLIVER

COVER D

TONČI ZONJIĆ

COVER E

JAY ANACLETO
& ROMULO FAJARDO JR.

COVER F (FOIL)

ITO

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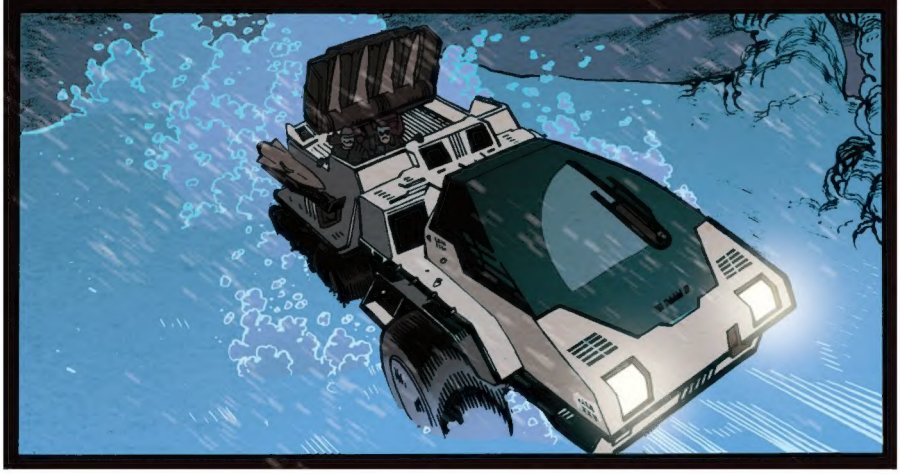
SECURE CHANNEL ENCODING.

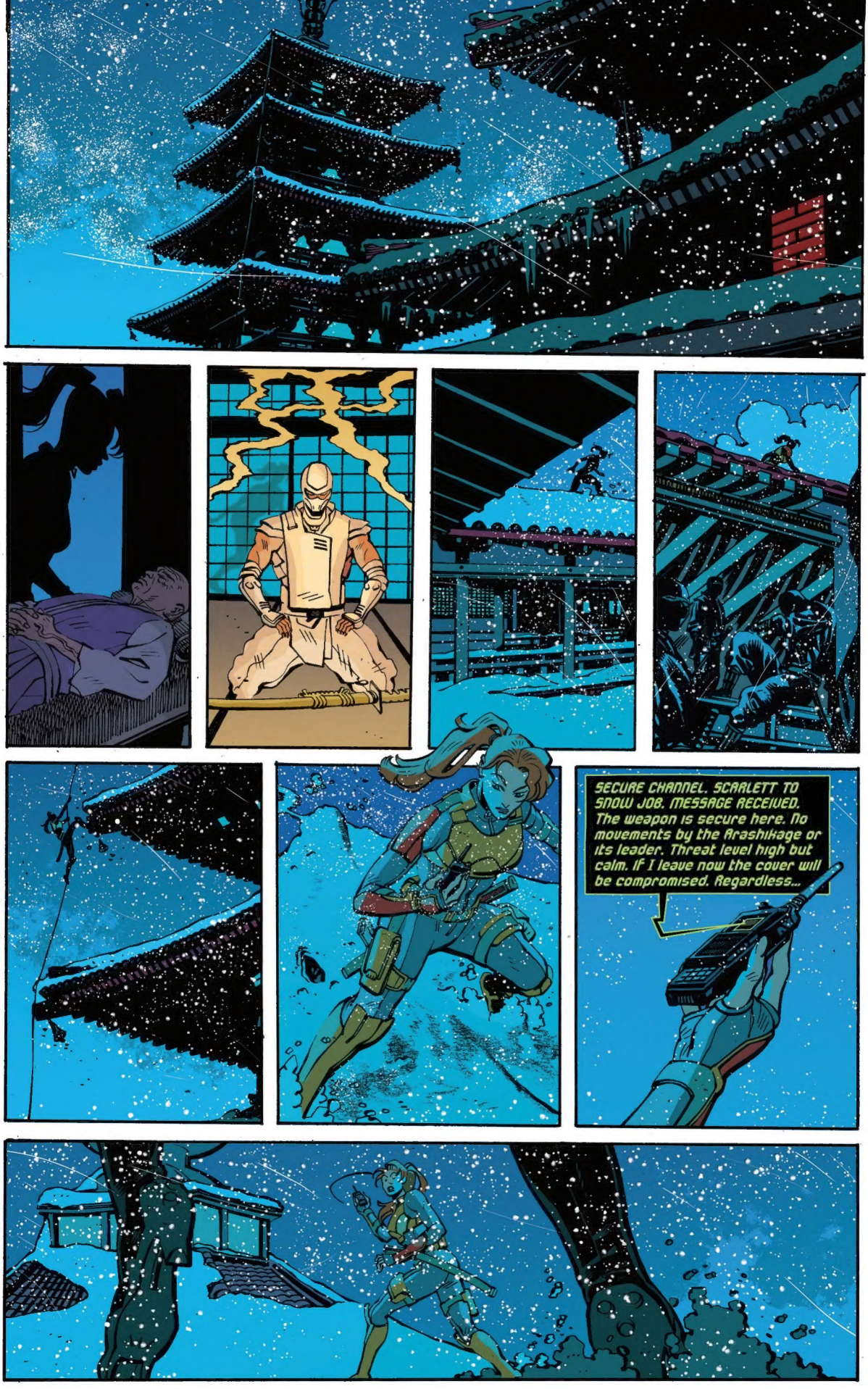
SNOWJOB MISSION REPORT.

Cover Girl, Frostbite, and I have been tasked with retrieving Sergeant Shana O'Hara. Codename: SCARLETT.

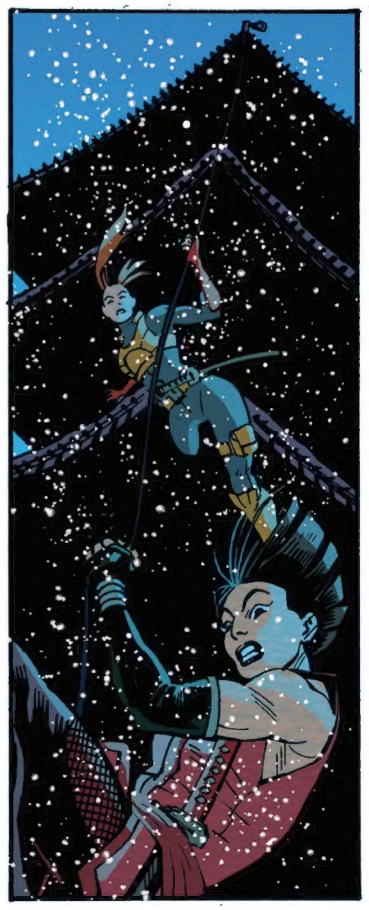


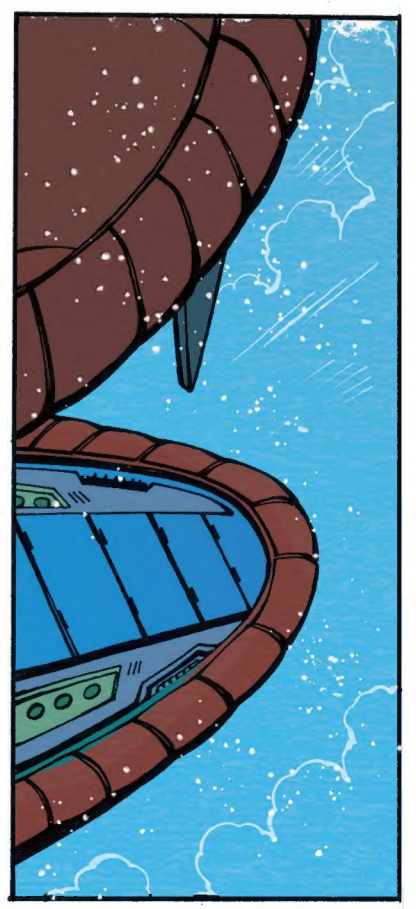
My last contact with Scarlett was during her undercover mission with the Arashikage. She, Storm Shadow, and Jinx retrieved a new energy weapon during a deadly encounter with Cobra Commander. They got lucky that it was during the early formation with Cobra, but it's only a matter of time before Cobra strikes back.

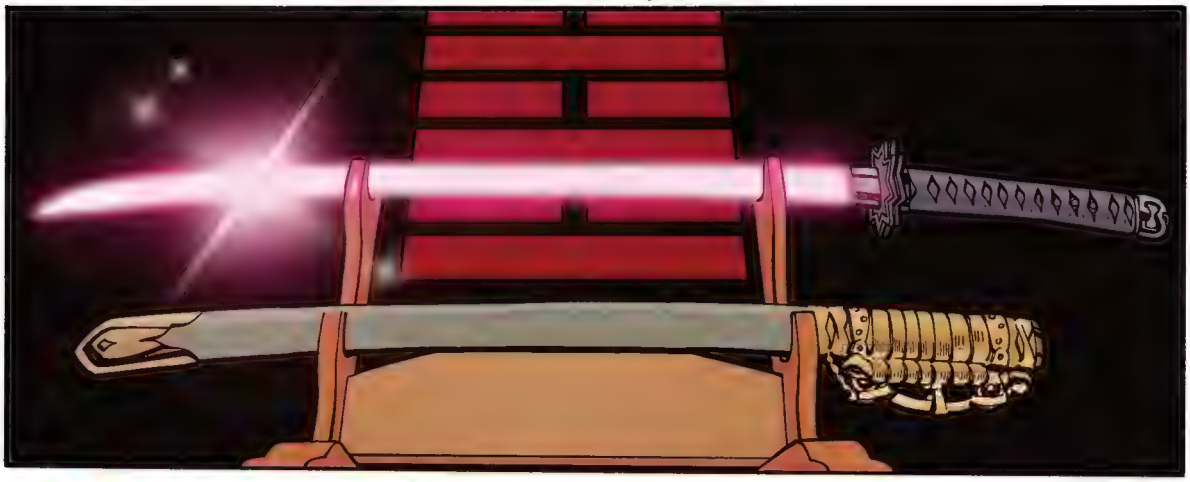
Colonel Hawk's orders are to bring Scarlett out of undercover from Arashikage, but I doubt she will come along willingly. If she does not, she will be considered an enemy of the state.

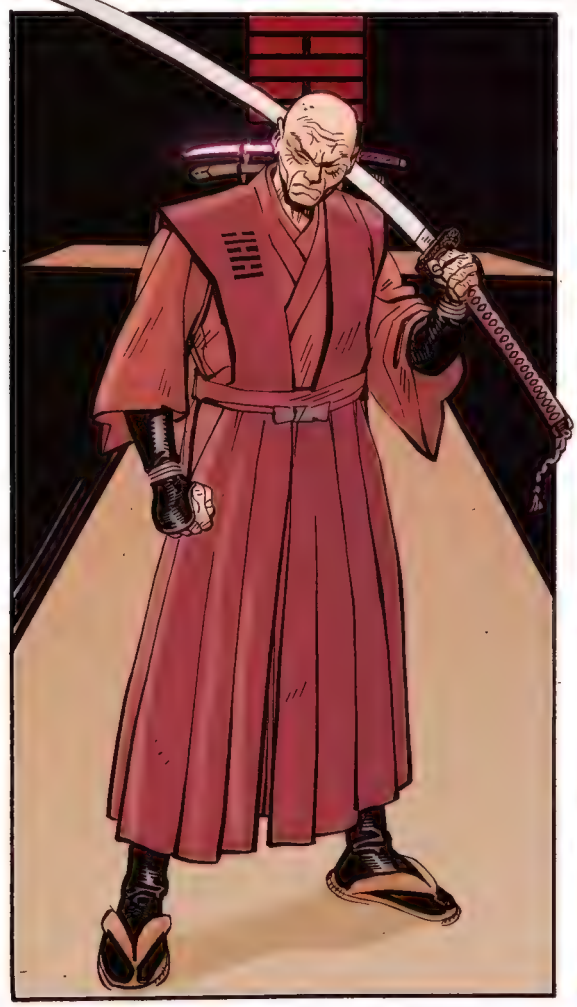

SECURE CHANNEL. SCARLETT TO SNOW JOB. MESSAGE RECEIVED. The weapon is secure here. No movements by the Arashikage or its leader. Threat level high but calm. If I leave now the cover will be compromised. Regardless...

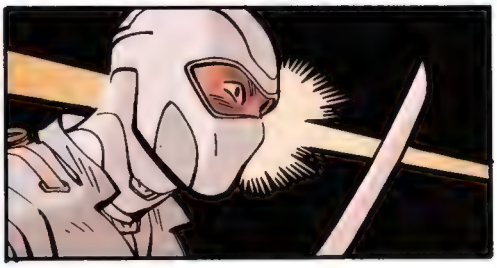
I can't leave without Jinx.
WHOMPWHOMPWHOMPWHOMPWHOMPWHOMPWHOMPWHOMP

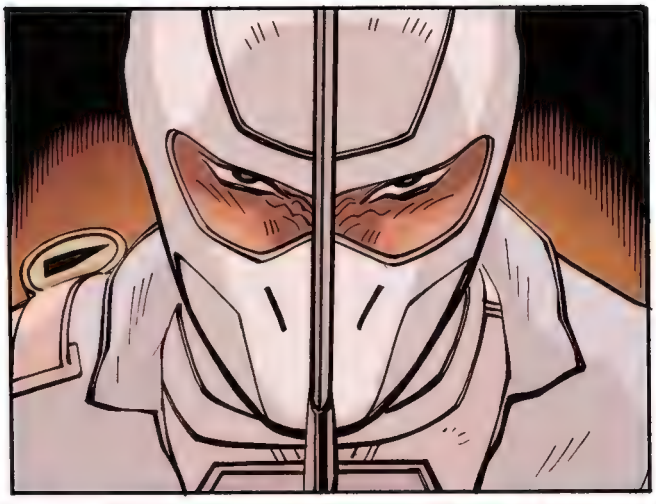


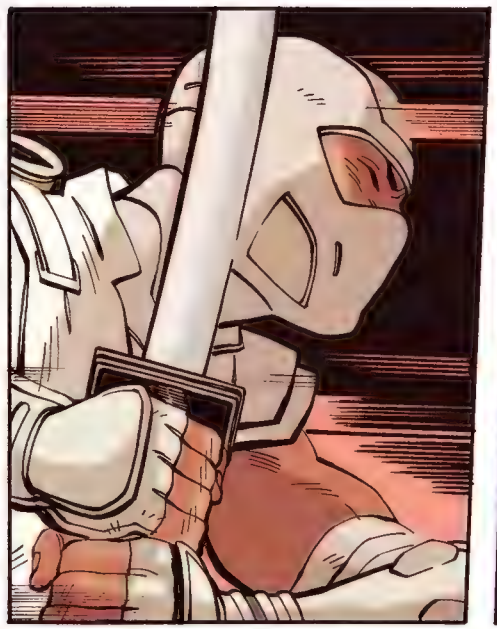


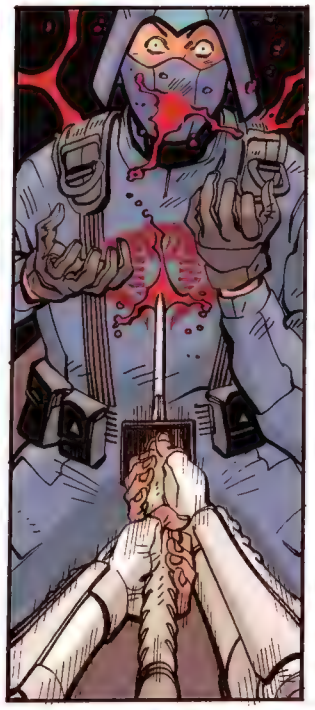
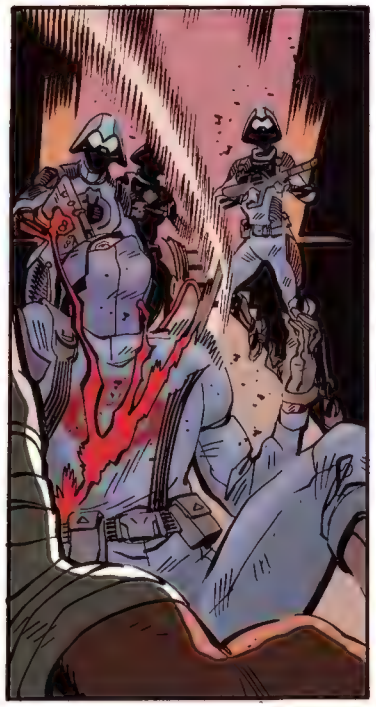


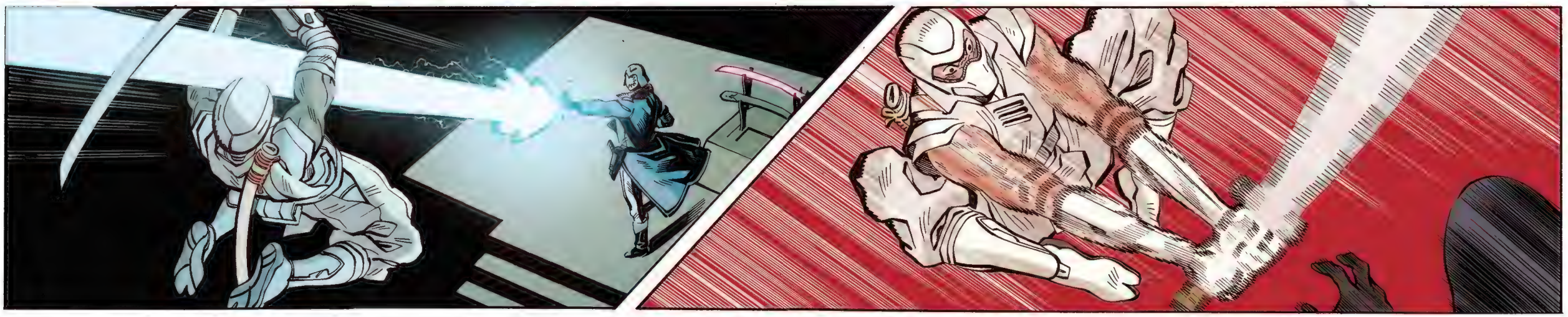


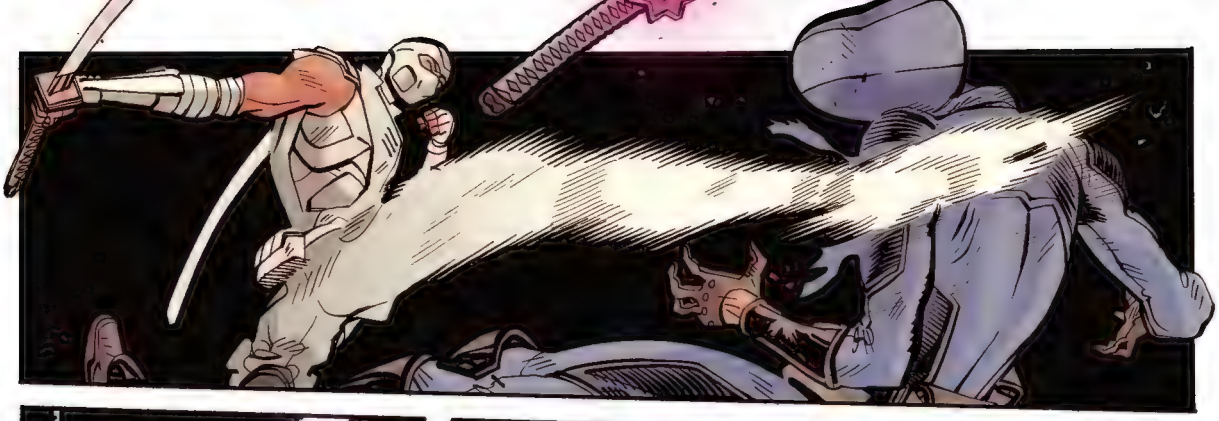


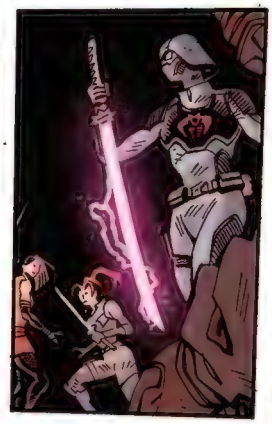


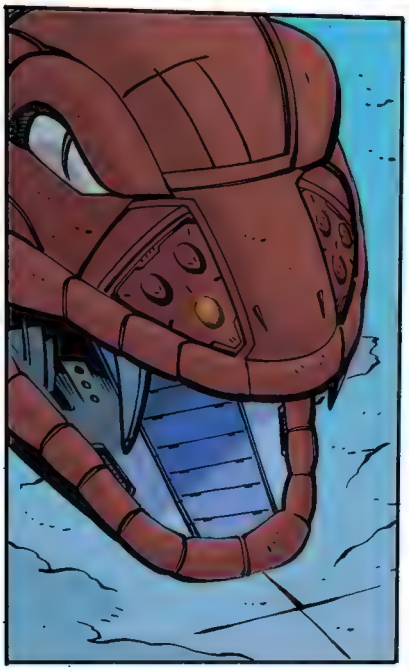


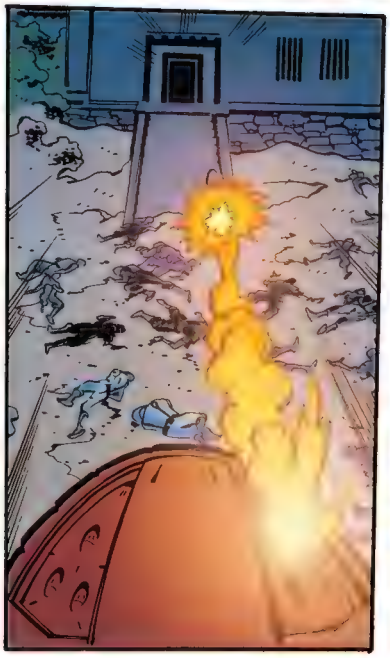



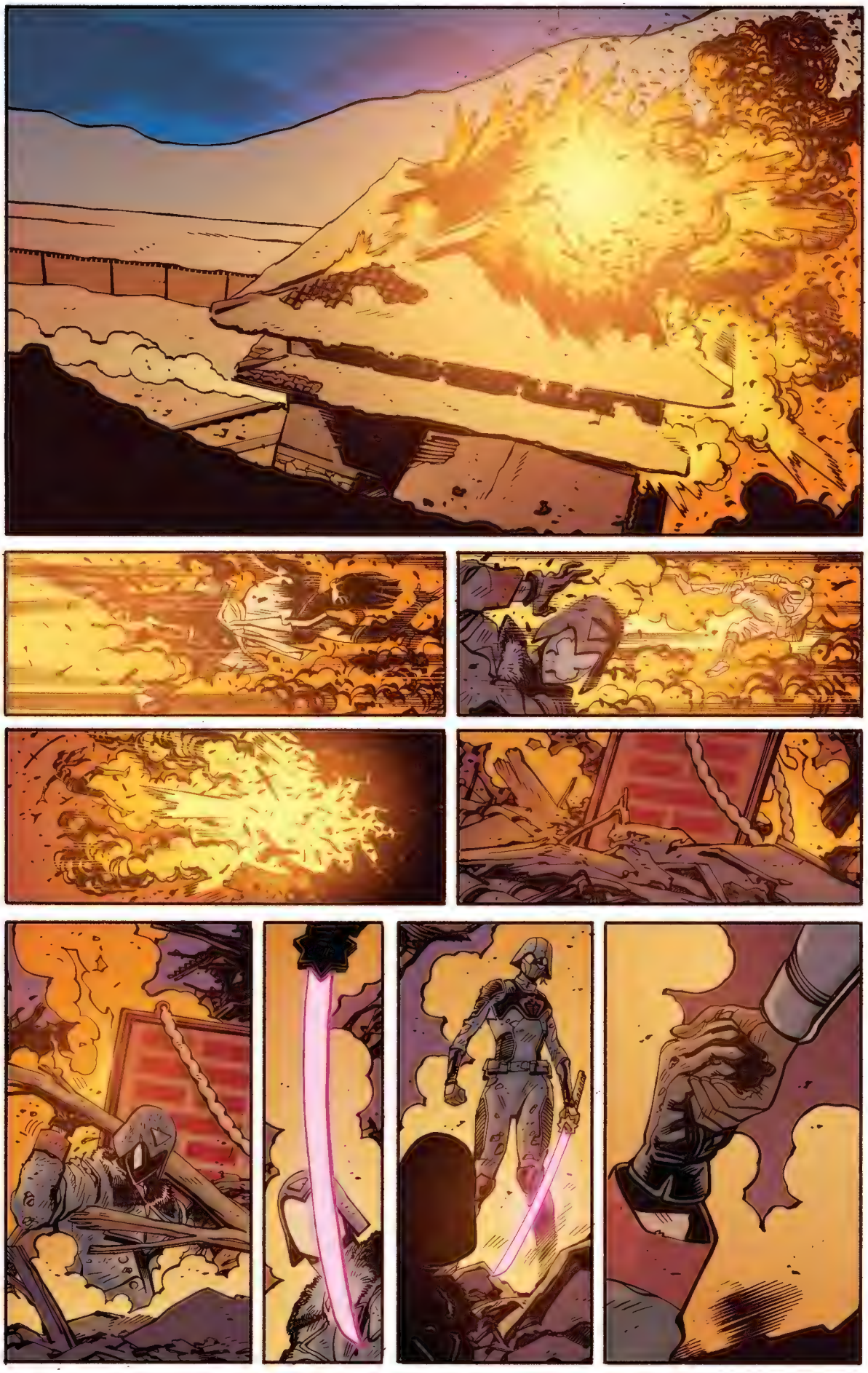




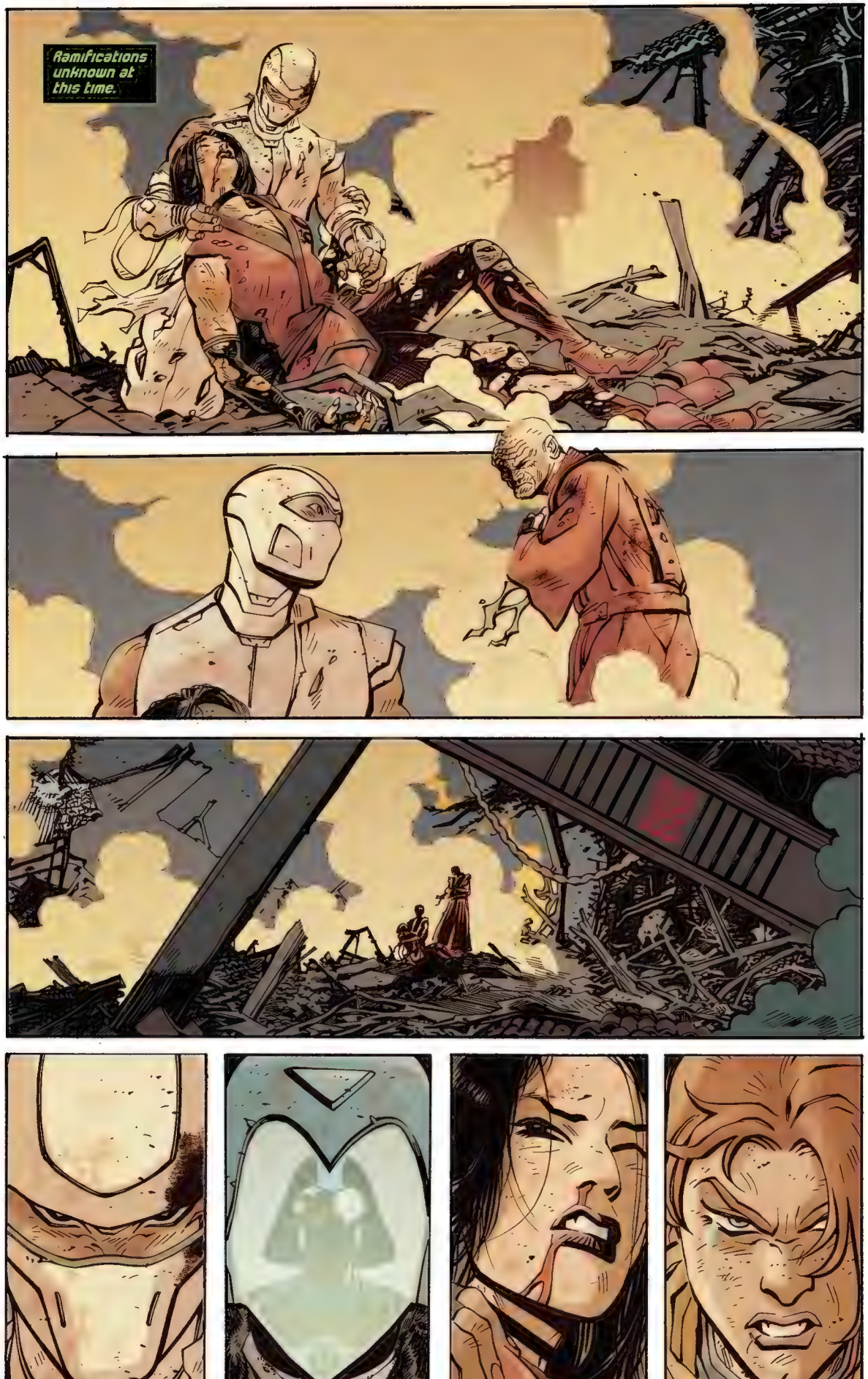








MISSION UPDATE.
Scarlett retrieved following a Cobra assault.
Cobra stole the weapon.
This appears to be the start of a new kind of conflict.


Ramifications unknown at this time.

STRAIGHT SHOOTERS

DIRECT ALL CORRESPONDENCE TO: GIJOE@SKYBOUND.COM

The Arashikage are BACK! Welcome to the latest edition of Straight Shooters where I, editor Ben Abernathy, and he, writer Joshua Williamson, answer your letters.

Joshua--you FINALLY get to write Storm Shadow and how appropriate it's for #21…

First, let me mention that this issue was mostly a silent issue. The classic and original G.I. JOE: A REAL AMERICAN HERO #21 was a silent issue and we wanted to continue that tradition here. BUT it was important to us that we still kept the book accessible to our newer readers. That was why we had some exposition at the start with Snow Job's mission report. I hope you enjoyed seeing Tom Reilly show off his storytelling skills without words this issue. Second, to answer your question about writing Storm Shadow...it's surreal.

Kelly Thompson did such an amazing job of writing the SCARLETT series and developed this whole section of the Energon Universe that I kind of felt like they were already part of the world that I was writing. But yeah, it's awesome to get the write Scarlett, Jinx and Storm Shadow. They were some of my favs growing up. They're all awesome characters and it's fun to finally start bringing in the ninja pieces of G.I. Joe's mythology more directly into the ongoing series. And now it's going to be a moment before we revisit these characters again, but I assure you that the events of this issue will have a major impact on the series in the future.

Let's crack open this mailbag…

Dear Joe Team,

Col. Hawk, aka Zartan, is sending Cover Girl to meet up with Snow Job? Are we about to finally see Scarlett in the main series as well as some certain ninjas? I love how this arc is going between all of the series. Everything seems to be on a collision course. I can't wait for the next issues! Keep up the good work!

-Jason

All I can say, Jason, is you're welcome! Thank you for the letter!

Thank you, Jason. I hope you enjoyed this issue! The phrase "collision course" is perfect. You'll notice we plant seeds and set up story pieces in issues that won't pay off immediately. It helps us create a rich experience with an ongoing title. But it's all built to explode later in the series.

Straight Shooters!

Just finished reading issue #18, man I love to see Scrap Iron in a big Monster truck (very M.A.S.K.) roll up on Matt Trakker and collect the bounty for Miles Mayhem! or will he? I feel like Hound will make a great addition to the G.I. Joe team if Duke can put his past dealings with Decepticon Starscream aside, which it looks like we could be working towarda. A thought just occurred to me, as Megatron was held captive by Cobra La, and Cobra La are hunting down Cobra Commander for his betrayal, is it possible we could see Megatron and Cobra Commander form an uneasy alliance at some point if we have more crossovers with Transformers? Or even better, Megatron secretly forming another alliance with Destro behind Cobra Commander's back with the intention to betray both Destro and Cobra Commander?

Great work as always!

Yo Joe!

-Mark

I also love seeing Scrap-Iron in a big monster truck! I always try to find ways to bring cool vehicles into the series. And to have a guest star like Matt Trakker who has a history of cool vehicles…I knew I needed a fun chase scene and that meant giving Scrap-Iron a monster truck! As for the rest…the most I can says is…stay tuned!

Yo, Joe Team!

I just read issue 19 and I'm wicked pumped. The threads from Scarlett finally making their way into the main title has me really excited. And having been a lifelong Transformers fan, seeing Hound interact with Duke and the other Joes and knowing Optimus is going to meet them next issue is really sick. I didn't grow up with G.I. Joe. I was born in '98 so the first live action movie was the only piece of Joe media I ever interacted with until the Energon Universe. Like I said, big Transformers guy, so that was my draw in (also loving Void Rivals), but between the four miniseries and the main title, you guys have sucked me in. I am becoming a fan thanks to you. My heart is grateful but my wallet is going to kill me. (Just ordered like 5 Classified figures).

Welcome to the fandom. I also love the Classified toys. They are a blast!

Knowing nothing about M.A.S.K., or really any of the wider Joe mythos I think has been a benefit to me, as I have no real expectations set, and can just digest and enjoy the books as they come out. Your take is my first impression, and so far I am *really* digging it. As for all the fantastically talented artists on the book,

between Tom, Andrea, Jordie, Lee, and Rus and a plethora of others, you are all *destroying* this book in the absolute best of ways. The story has me intrigued and attached to the characters, sure, but your visuals and storytelling really keep me glued. Thank you all on behalf of everyone for the long, hard work you all pour in. It's not unnoticed.

Thank you. I feel it's an embarrassment of riches with the artists I get to work with on G.I. JOE. The artists, the colorists, the letters…everyone is doing kick ass work. It's a joy to watch the issue come together every month.

Josh, I've seen you on Sal's various shows over the years, mainly All-Stars, and getting to know the guy behind the book that way has been really helpful in putting your unique voice into perspective whenever I piece together these characters in my head. Everyone really shines on their own and the plots have been crazy.

I appreciate you saying that. I don't really do a lot of appearances or interviews nowadays. But I enjoy doing those videos with Sal. To be honest, you're mostly just watching two friends hang out and talk about comic books or talk about things they love. I'm glad that it helps you connect with me and with my work. So, again, thank you.

Sorry for the wicked long letter, I've never written in mail to a comic before despite being a regular reader since around 2011. Can't wait to see what trouble the EU gets up to next!

-Andrew

Thank you for writing in, Andrew, and FIRST PRINTED LETTER!

Hello all,

Loooonnng time listener, first time caller. I've really enjoyed what you are doing with the Energon universe as well as ARAH. I like your timely roll out of characters and fleshing them out as opposed to some of the old Marvel issues where characters were merely "roll called". Lots of letters have been begging for Snake Eyes and Storm Shadow to appear, but they can wait, I like the focus you are putting on the other characters. I also like Chameleon, more of her please. How about a one off mission between arcs for some "old dogs" that never got their due in Short Fuse, Zap and Flash!

That's awesome to hear. I also really like Chameleon, and we have some fun plans for her that I think will surprise people. We talk about this a lot, but yeah we try to make sure every character gets the best intro possible.

I am also really enjoying Void Rivals and Transformers (although a little confusing for me at times). Soundwave is the best!

Keep up the great work!

-Greg

Thanks, Greg, and we'll add that trio our list of characters to include at some point.

Yo Joes!

Just finished catching up on my G.I. Joe. Issues #17 & 18. All I can say is, DAMN! You guys really stuck the landing on the Dreadnok War! The reveal at the end of the issue had me jumping up and down in my office! Zartan always gave me the creeps as a kid. Maybe that's why he's one of my favorite Joe villains! Read the issue TWICE!

HA! That's great! Zartan has always been one of my favorite villains. I wanted to make sure that when we finally introduced him there was in a really big, fun way…but as you now know he was sort of there the whole time!

Only to follow it up with what is sure to be the start of another incredible arc! Issue #18, Roadblock's introduction to the series was like watching a summer bl ockbuster action movie through the pages of a comic! Hat's off to guest artist Marco Fodera!

I had a blast writing the Roadblock issue. It was different from the other Night Force issues in that it was a bit more grounded. With that issue, I was really influenced by the old P.S.A.s that ran with the cartoons. I'm happy that the bulk of the issue took place at a food cart lot, and you still felt it was a summer blockbuster.

Joshua Williamson, Tom Reilly and company. As long as your team at Skybound keeps cranking out this level of quality, keep taking my money! Can't wait to see what The Energon Universe has in store for us this year! Keep up the stellar work ladies and gentlemen!

-JG

And that's a wrap for this month…keep the letters coming and buckle up for next month!

-Ben

Thank you to everyone for writing this month and every month. As I wrote earlier in this letters page, I often feel like I live in a bubble and I don't always know how people are feeling about these books, but reading these letters is inspiring and encouraging. Next month starts our three-part arc involving Risk and Crystal Ball and some surprises in our first HORROR ARC. Hope you're ready for some scares!

-Joshua

ENERGON EXPERIENCE

The Arashikage are BACK! We've not seen Storm Shadow, Scarlett, and Jinx since waaaay back in SCARLETT #5, but they're back with a vengeance! After this crushing defeat and theft, how will this legendary ninja clan respond...will Storm Shadow assume leadership and seek a path of revenge? Keep reading!

Bam!

Ben Abernathy, Executive Editor

CHARACTER SPOTLIGHT

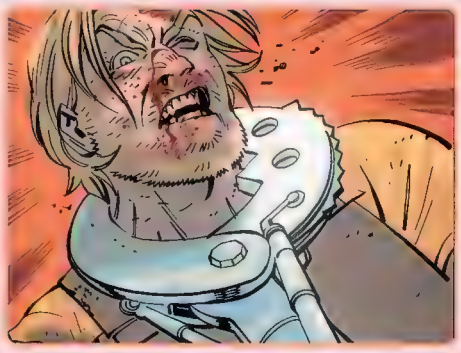
WHO: Shana O'Hara

Codename: Scarlett.

WHAT: A master hand-to-hand fighter and expert in most weapons, Sergeant Shana O'Hara has been undercover with the Arashikage attempting to bring her friend and fellow operative Jinx in the from cold.

NINJA VS. COBRA!

We've had a LOT of people ask about what was next for Arashikage after the SCARLETT series and if we'd see them clash with Cobra again...so I hope Joshua, Tom, Lee, and Rus delivered the goods with this issue! And will we see Storm Shadow lead a mission of revenge and recovery in the near future? Only time will tell, but I have a feeling the Arashikage can hold a grudge for a long time!



CREATOR SPOTLIGHT

With Tom Reilly again joining us on interior pages, I felt it was time to ask him the most important question of all!

Q: Tom, if you had a G.I. JOE codename, what would it be?

A: I was asked this at a convention a couple years back and my answer is still the same... Bargain Bin reporting for duty!

THE ENERGON UNIVERSE CHECKLIST

- ☐ TRANSFORMERS #31 AVAILABLE 4/8
- ☐ G.I. JOE #21 AVAILABLE 4/15
- ☐ VOID RIVALS #29 AVAILABLE 4/22

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IT'S TIME FOR YOU TO SAVE THE WORLD.

DAN WATTERS PYE PARR PIERLUIGI CASOLINO

MASK

MOBILE ARMORED STRIKE KOMMAND

THE RACE IS ON JUNE 2026

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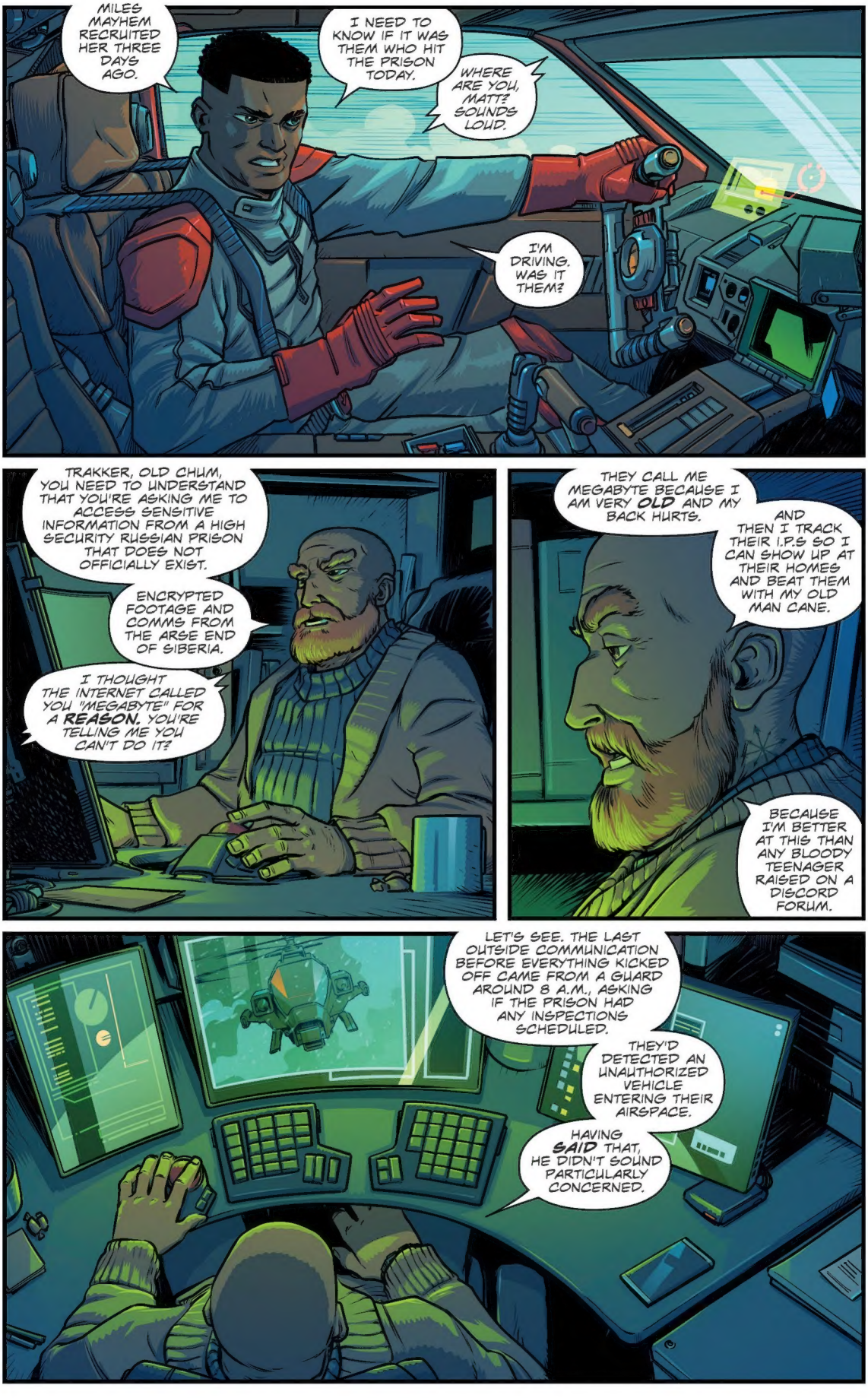
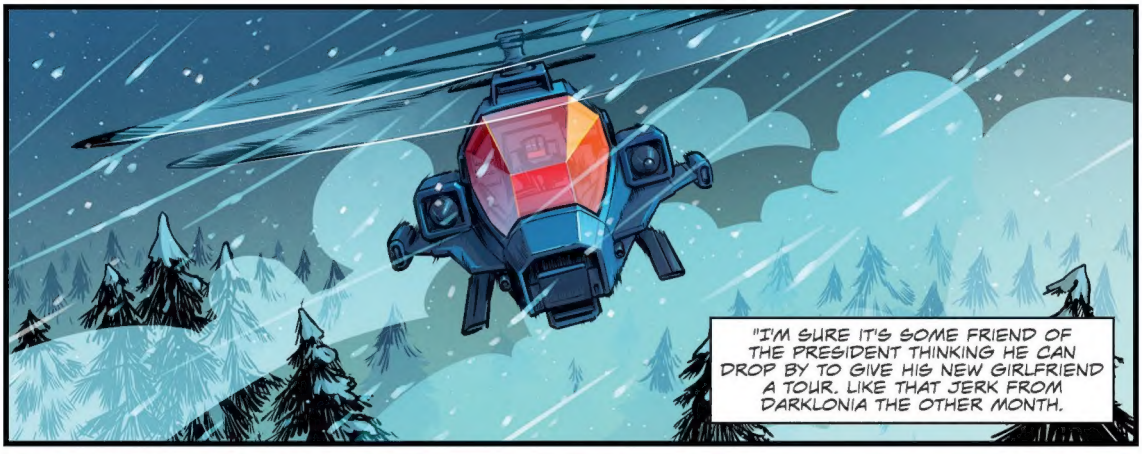
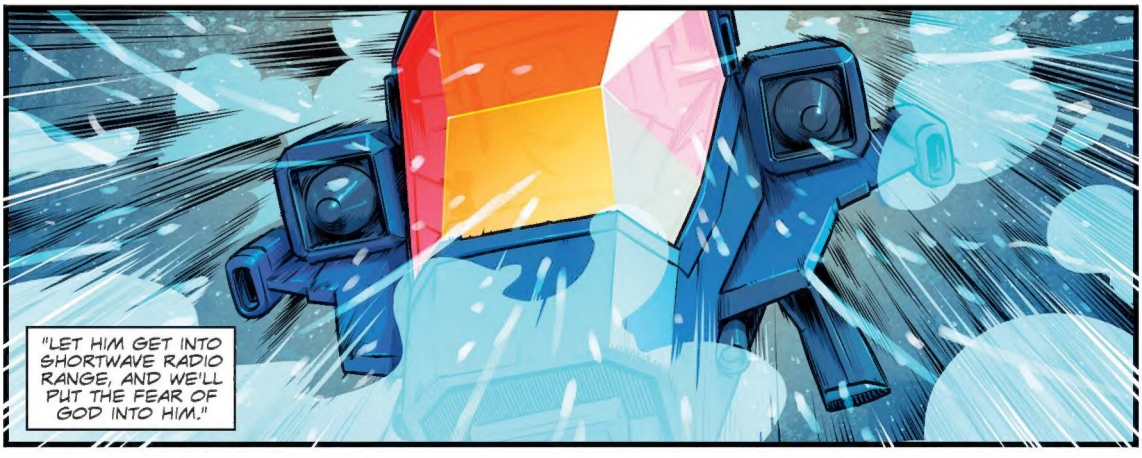

MILES MAYHEM RECRUITED HER THREE DAYS AGO.
I NEED TO KNOW IF IT WAS THEM WHO HIT THE PRISON TODAY.
WHERE ARE YOU, MATT? SOUNDS LOUD.
I'M DRIVING. WAS IT THEM?
TRAKKER, OLD CHUM, YOU NEED TO UNDERSTAND THAT YOU'RE ASKING ME TO ACCESS SENSITIVE INFORMATION FROM A HIGH SECURITY RUSSIAN PRISON THAT DOES NOT OFFICIALLY EXIST.
ENCRYPTED FOOTAGE AND COMMS FROM THE ARSE END OF SIBERIA.
I THOUGHT THE INTERNET CALLED YOU "MEGABYTE" FOR A REASON. YOU'RE TELLING ME YOU CAN'T DO IT?
THEY CALL ME MEGABYTE BECAUSE I AM VERY OLD AND MY BACK HURTS.
AND THEN I TRACK THEIR I.P.S SO I CAN SHOW UP AT THEIR HOMES AND BEAT THEM WITH MY OLD MAN CANE.
BECAUSE I'M BETTER AT THIS THAN ANY BLOODY TEENAGER RAISED ON A DISCORD FORUM.
LET'S SEE. THE LAST OUTSIDE COMMUNICATION BEFORE EVERYTHING KICKED OFF CAME FROM A GUARD AROUND 8 A.M., ASKING IF THE PRISON HAD ANY INSPECTIONS SCHEDULED.
THEY'D DETECTED AN UNAUTHORIZED VEHICLE ENTERING THEIR AIRSPACE.
HAVING SAID THAT, HE DIDN'T SOUND PARTICULARLY CONCERNED.

NO. NO NEED TO SOUND THE ALARM. IT'S A PERSONAL HELICOPTER.
NO WEAPONS ON A MACHINE LIKE THAT.


"I'M SURE IT'S SOME FRIEND OF THE PRESIDENT THINKING HE CAN DROP BY TO GIVE HIS NEW GIRLFRIEND A TOUR. LIKE THAT JERK FROM DARKLONIA THE OTHER MONTH.


"LET HIM GET INTO SHORTWAVE RADIO RANGE, AND WE'LL PUT THE FEAR OF GOD INTO HIM."

OKAY. IT WAS MAYHEM.
HOW DO YOU KNOW? PLENTY OF RICH BASTARDS TRAVEL BY HELICOPTER.
BECAUSE THAT WASN'T A HELICOPTER. NOT REALLY...

WAIT...WAIT, WHAT IS IT DOING?!

"...THEY'D JUST ENCOUNTERED THE BLADEJET PROTOTYPE."
MAMA.
TO BE CONTINUED IN
FW MASK
MOBILE ARMORED STRIKE KOMMAND
#1

MEPHISTO